

NSC BRIEFING

3 June 1958

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FRANCE-NORTH AFRICA

- I. De Gaulle's success in wresting reluctant parliamentary approval of full powers for six months and of authority to revise constitution clears way for action on North Africa and reform of French political institutions.
  - A. Investiture vote (329-224) was smaller margin than De Gaulle hoped for and encouraged balky National Assembly to put up last-ditch obstacles to his bill changing present constitution's amending procedure so he can undertake constitutional revision without Assembly approval.
    1. Both houses finally passed constitutional amendment bill by two-thirds majorities--this size vote makes further parliamentary action unnecessary, avoids later parliamentary roadblocking effort.
    2. De Gaulle compromised 2 June by agreeing to parliamentary representation on committee which will work out details of revision before it is submitted to popular referendum.
  - B. De Gaulle's constitutional revision plans call for "effective separation" of legislative and executive powers.
    1. However, on 2 June he explicitly rejected idea previously attributed to him of favoring US-type presidency. He will leave executive responsibility to parliament.
  - C. De Gaulle also moving swiftly on North Africa.
    1. Personal letters to Tunisian President Bourguiba and Moroccan King Mohammed express desire for friendly relations, set tone of his approach to them.

DOS review(s)  
completed.

*tomorrow*

2. He plans flying trip to Algiers, where pro-De Gaulle army and extremist colons already are at odds over new govt.
3. Nomination of tough Socialist Max Lejeune as Minister for Algeria-Sahara may help ease tension there.

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(a) [redacted] De Gaulle envisages a federation of African states (Algeria and equatorial territories) with seat of govt in Algiers.

(b) Embassy has reports he may soon hold Black African "round table" to announce autonomy for these territories and to consider form of their link to France.

(c) French Union "round table"--inviting Morocco, Tunisia, former Associated States of Indochina--may also be in the cards.

II. De Gaulle's new cabinet--already target of rightist criticism--reflects his effort to line up broader support for investiture and his intention to dominate key ministries.

A. All non-extremist groups except bitterly hostile Mendesist Radicals are represented in cabinet, and major groups (except Radicals) are also represented on small "inner cabinet."

1. Inner cabinet (4 Minister of State) includes

Socialist Guy Mollet

Popular Republican Pierre Pflimlin

Independent Louis Jacquinot

Democratic Resistance Union affiliate Felix Houphouet-Boigny, a native West Africa with past cabinet experience.

2. Finance Minister Pinay presumably would also rate inner circle standing.
3. De Gaulle is acting as own Defense Minister.
  - (a) Since no military appointed to cabinet, this may be only way to ensure healing breach between Paris and army in Algeria.
  - (b) Selection of atomic energy expert Guillaumat as Deputy Defense Minister probably foreshadows drive to make France fourth nuclear weapons power as soon as possible.
4. Choice of non-political figures for key posts of Foreign Ministry and Interior Ministry suggests De Gaulle's intention to keep policy reins firmly in hand in these spheres.
  - (a) However, choice of Couve de Murville, ambassador to Bonn and formerly to Washington, seems also desire to reassure major capitals on score of French alliances.
  - (b) De Gaulle may expect Minister of Interior Emile Pelletier, formerly Paris civil prefect, to be more loyal to régime than a politician would, and to be more capable of coping with civil disorder.
5. Only two "Gaullists" in cabinet are not in key posts:  
Minister of <sup>Justice</sup> Education - Senator Michel Debre  
Secretary of State for Information - rightist author Andre Malraux.
6. De Gaulle has "bridge of labor" via Mollet (to the Force Ouvrière) and via Popular Republican Minister of Labor Paul Bacon (to the Christian Labor Federation).

**III. De Gaulle's foreign policies still not precise.**

25X1      A. Re NATO— [redacted] De Gaulle realizes he must live with it, but will insist on greater French share in planning.

B. Re European integration— [redacted] De Gaulle favors 25X1

"European community built around France" rather than one in which France is equal partner.

1. French warnings that precarious financial position may cur their implementation of Common Market could serve De Gaulle as excuse for stalling if not pulling out.

**IV. Leftist opposition to De Gaulle not yet crystallized.**

A. Communists, despite much frothing at mouth, failed to go all out in demonstrations, and have not called general strike.

1. Deterred by cautious Moscow approach to De Gaulle.

2. Can't afford to act without cooperation of free trade unions, who refused unity of action during crisis.

B. Serious split in Socialists over De Gaulle found majority voting against Mollet's recommendation. These, together with Mendes-France Radicals, could form nucleus of future effort to form Popular Front unless De Gaulle can move swiftly to resolve major problems.

North Africa

**V. In Algeria junta leaders dissatisfied with composition and possible policies De Gaulle govt.**

A. Unhappy over extent De Gaulle compromises with "regime of parties" and especially over Pflimflin's inclusion in new cabinet.

B. Also greatly concerned that De Gaulle envisions federal status for North Africa, possibly even negotiations with FLN rebels.

1. Algiers leaders, especially local Europeans, bitterly oppose such autonomy; their avowed new willingness concorde Moslems full integration conditioned on maintenance strongly centralized French state.
2. American consul general in Algiers says this integration for which Soustelle principal proponent program now in complete ascendancy there. Says local pressures for "ambitious" French Algerian policy and against any negotiations with FLN now so strong he doubts whether even De Gaulle can overcome them.
3. However, army leaders in Algeria, who have recently tightened their control over civilian administration throughout area, unlikely openly to oppose any De Gaulle policies for present.
4. For moment military apparently going along with civilian plans to perpetuate public safety committees and continue demonstrations to maintain pressure on Paris.
5. But army, relieved <sup>of</sup> its insurrection in effect "legitimized" by De Gaulle's coming to power, <sup>now</sup> would probably withdraw completely from any overt association such pressure tactics on word from De Gaulle.
6. Local civilian extremists will die harder, may foment some disorders. However, their potentialities limited in absence army support.

C. Moslem participation in organized demonstrations hailing "new French Algeria" continuing but this still purely surface development. Consul general believes no fundamental change of attitude on part of Moslems and that they certainly not suddenly regarding selves as Frenchmen as junta claim.

D. FLN, while apparently somewhat hopeful that De Gaulle will reach accommodation with them, will almost certainly continue war till right to independence at least implicitly recognized.

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Tunisia and Morocco

VI. Tunis and Rabat hopeful De Gaulle's accession to power may lead to resolution of crisis, yet still fearful Algiers military may attempt to reoccupy their countries.

A. Situation in southern Tunisia, where three clashes between French and Tunisian military have occurred in past ten days, still explosive.

B. Tunisia pressing for Security Council hearing.

C. Tunisians considering new French offer to regroup and progressively evacuate some troops, but object to prolonged timetable and French deadline of 1 July for completion

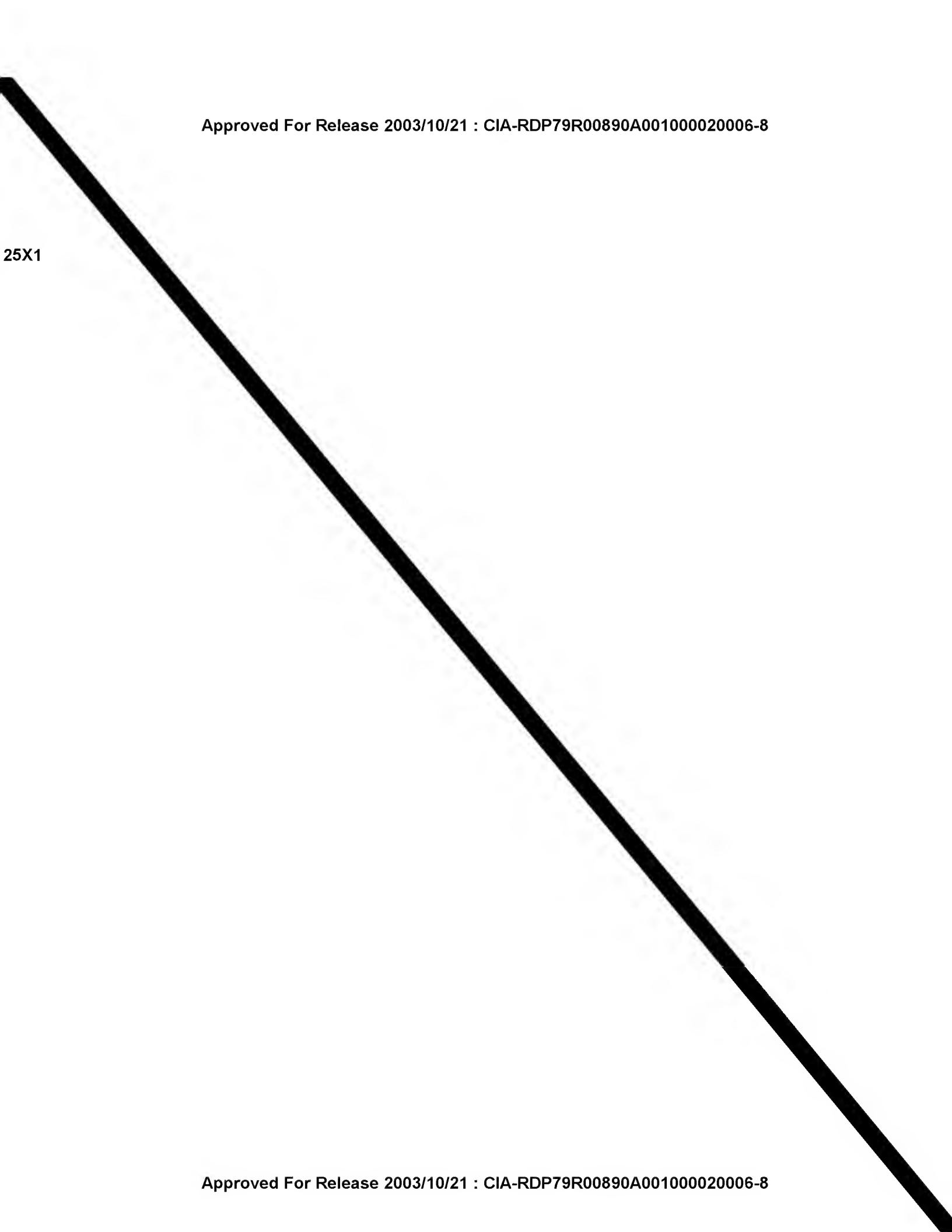
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D. Situation in Morocco most acute in eastern border area  
where Algerian refugees, rebel units, French military  
and reinforced Moroccan military coexist.

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